

Figure 10.1 How to Organize Negative Messages

Negative messages to clients and customers	Negative messages to superiors	Negative messages to peers and subordinates
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When you have a reason that the audience will understand and accept, give the reason before the refusal. A good reason prepares the audience to expect the refusal.2. Give the negative information or refusal just once, clearly. Inconspicuous refusals can be missed altogether, making it necessary to say <i>no</i> a second time.3. Present an alternative or compromise, if one is available. An alternative not only gives the audience another way to get what they want but also suggests that you care about them and helping them meet their needs.4. End with a positive, forward-looking statement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the problem. Tell what's wrong, clearly and unemotionally.2. Tell how it happened. Provide the background. What underlying factors led to this specific problem?3. Describe the options for fixing it. If one option is clearly best, you may need to discuss only one. But if your superiors will think of other options, or if different people will judge the options differently, describe all the options, giving their advantages and disadvantages.4. Recommend a solution and ask for action. Ask for approval so that you can make the necessary changes to fix the problem.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the problem. Tell what's wrong, clearly and unemotionally.2. Present an alternative or compromise, if one is available. An alternative not only gives the audience another way to get what they want but also suggests that you care about them and helping them meet their needs.3. If possible, ask for input or action. People in the audience may be able to suggest solutions. And workers who help make a decision are far more likely to accept the consequences.

Figure 10.2 A Negative Letter

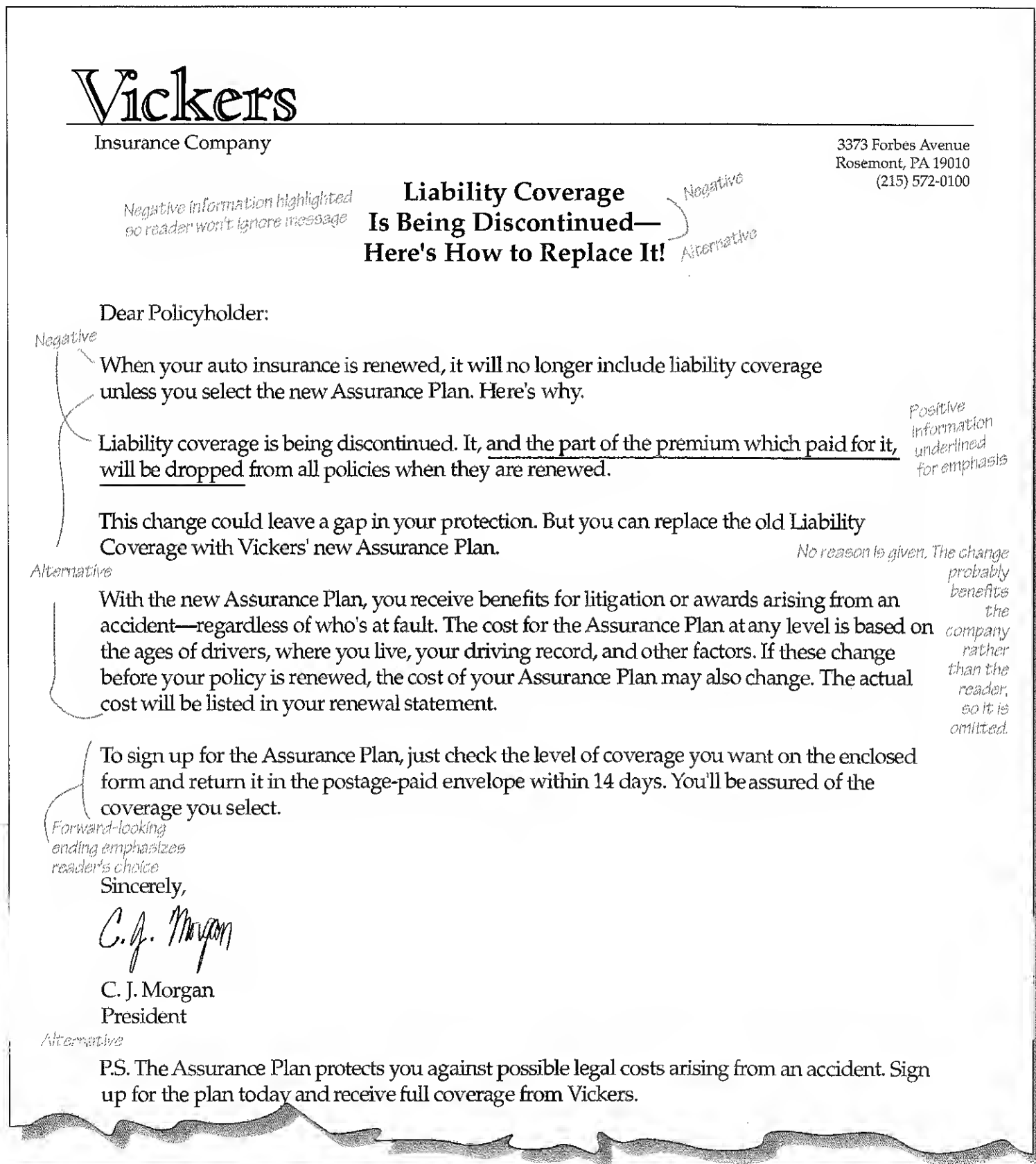


Figure 10.3 A Negative Memo to Subordinates

FIRST BANK
Great Plains, Nebraska

Memo

Date: January 10, 2012
To: All Employees
From: Floyd E. Mattson **FEM**
Subject: Group Dental Insurance

First Bank is always seeking to provide employees with a competitive benefits package that meets their needs.

In response to many requests, the Human Resource Department solicited bids for expanded dental coverage. At this time none of the responses from insurers serving our area are affordable for us. We continue to negotiate, but with costs rising at 20% per year, success seems unlikely. Other banks in the area are in a similar situation, so our current benefits package matches or exceeds what they offer.

First Bank continues to offer enrollment in an employee-funded group plan with ABC Dental. The coverage includes 37 dentists in our county and pays 50 percent of allowable fees. Many of our employees have found this coverage helpful. Employees also may use their medical savings account for dental care. Consider one of these options for the present, and First Bank will continue to investigate new opportunities for expanded coverage.

Reason
given before
negative

Positive

Alternatives

Positive
close